

Craignish Community Company

Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday 8th November 2023 at 7.30pm via Zoom

Present:

Board: Vicki Burnett (Chair), Mandy Clarke, Mark Hampton, Christian Smyth (Treasurer), Jane Smees (Secretary).

Actions required:

- Vicki to contact Siobhan as we have not heard from her for a while
- Vicki/Christian to organise rejoining Community Development Trust
- Mark to contact Community Council re MOWI
- Jane to send out list of Board meetings for 2024
- Jane to adopt new procedure for circulating draft minutes
- Vicki/Christian to check reimbursement of VAT on advertisement payment
- Vicki to re-publicise our offer of financial help
- Vicki to publicise updating craignish.info
- Vicki to follow up the credit scheme suggestion
- Vicki to talk to project initiator about knotweed

1. Apologies: Laura Leslie-Sherwood, Siobhan Healy.

2. Minutes of meetings on 11th and 21st October were approved. Matters arising:

- There is no more that we can do for now as regards carers, and the prescription collection service, which are both working as well as possible in the circumstances thanks to local volunteers, Mandy Hampton and Sally MacLeod in particular.
- On Employers Liability Insurance, Christian reported that we are not covered by our present policy, and, although he had found a very helpful contact at the insurers, obtaining cover would involve a lot of work, and payment of a higher premium.
- Vicki reported that she had been in contact again with the Community Development Trust, who had responded quickly and said that there might be some funding available to help with the current situation. She proposed that we rejoin the Trust, and this was agreed.
- On the business advertisement project, Mark noted that we had not heard anything from MOWI who are the largest employer in the area. They are actually meant to liaise with the Community Council (CC). Mark agreed to try and speak to the CC and find out if they had heard anything.

3. Skate Park: This was postponed to the December meeting. Ben Weaser had joined the meeting, but unfortunately had technical problems with the Zoom link and had to leave without presenting his ideas. Vicki explained that he was also keen to become a director if we took up the project. (Ben later sent a message apologising for the glitch, and explaining briefly that the local skate group "Rusty Bearings" have the chance of acquiring a portable skate ramp, and are looking for some land for a permanent park.) There was some general discussion about recruiting new directors and members. Jane will send out the list of Board meetings for next year.

4. Sending out Board Minutes to Members: Vicki had received a request that we do this, from a member. After a brief discussion it was agreed that we would do this, (we have email addresses for all members so it is not difficult) after the board members had seen them, and had 7 days to check that they reflect discussions and decisions accurately. Jane will send out the draft minutes on this basis from now on.

5. Finance: Christian had provided a copy of the September quarterly cash book prior to the meeting. The only additional item was a payment of £480 for the local businesses

advertisement in the Oban Times. Vicki wondered if we could claim back the VAT on this; she and Christian will check.

6. Landslip:

- Everyone agreed that Laura had made brilliant work of the advertisement for local businesses in the Oban Times.
- Vicki's contact with Business Gateway and their subsequent press release had sparked a lot of media interest, with articles in local and national newspapers, and radio interviews. A BBC interview had been written up on their website, with a link to Craignish.info. This had recently had over 5,500 visitors and people were clearly thinking about coming to the area. There will be a further press release for the Christmas Market (which is very important for the Village Hall) and Argyll and Bute Council will also publicise it.
- Following our publicity, one request had been received for financial assistance. It was agreed that a one-off contribution would be paid. This will be set up with a proper audit trail but all the details will remain strictly confidential to the Board and recipient. It was agreed that it was worth repeating the offer as the latest estimate on the opening of the road is now at least a month later than had been hoped. Vicki will re-publicise it.

7. craignish.info website: Tiziana Tedoldi has updated it for us to include local businesses. It was originally a C3 initiative and it was agreed that it was a useful resource and that we should keep it going, possibly, as discussed at the last meeting, recruiting a young person (16+) to join the board and keep the website updated. Vicki will arrange some publicity for this. Tiziana is also happy to continue to update it on her very reasonable hourly rate.

8. Suggestions arising from our invitation on our landslip publicity:

- Community Fridge: a member raised this as they have been working on it independently. They had approached various local organisations to find a host with no success to date. Possible sites and problems were discussed, and it was agreed that, especially as relief of poverty is one of our core aims, we should support this. But we need more information. The member will be invited to the next meeting so that we can look at this again.
- Up-to-date version of the Craignish phone book: this was a project and fund-raiser for the School rather than C3 in the past, and an update is in progress.
- Credit scheme for local businesses: this would enable people to make deposits with local businesses, redeemable later for goods/services, to aid cash flow. It was agreed that, while this was a good idea, it was too complicated a project for C3 to take on, though if someone else was willing, we could certainly publicise it. Vicki will go back to the person who suggested it and feed back.

9. Demonstration & Research Marine Protected Area consultation: This had turned out to be a lengthy document and more time was needed to evaluate it. It will be considered at the next meeting.

10. Updates:

- Christian reported that he had been in contact with Angus Bevan, the organiser of Craignish Conservation Volunteers (dealing with invasive species). They had held a very successful recruitment drive and were ready to go ahead with acquiring some tools, first aid kits and coffee. Christian will arrange the payments for these on a piece-by-piece basis, up to the £400 previously agreed.
- On knotweed, Mandy reported that despite a lot of research she had found it extremely difficult to find any decisive advice about the best way to deal with it. Spraying glyphosate (Roundup), if done carefully, was generally considered the safest way. Spraying needs to be done annually for 3-5 years. This would only make it dormant, not eradicate it, which could only be done by digging

out the extensive root systems and making special arrangements for their disposal. Also, it is advised that spraying should not be carried out on the shoreline or near other water sources. Dealing with it by injection required attendance on a specialist course. In view of all this information, it was agreed that we should review the knotweed spraying programme to ensure it was in line with current advice. Vicki will speak to the initiator of the project about how it's working currently and thoughts for the future.

- As Laura was unable to attend, updates on the Galley, and a guide to local walks, were postponed to the next meeting.
11. Everyone thanked Vicki for all the hard work that she had put in on landslip publicity, and the great results this had achieved.
 12. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 13th December 2023 at 7.30pm via Zoom.

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Chair

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Date